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Ala Wai Flood Control Plan - Community Comments

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Oceanit has been working to organize and run community outreach meetings to solicit local engagement on the proposed Ala Wai Canal flood management plans. Oceanit's Innovation Consulting team was contracted by the "Permitted Interaction Group," sanctioned under the City Council and led by Council Members Carol Fukunaga, Ann Kobayashi and Tommy Waters. The primary purpose was to conduct outreach and ideate alternatives to the initial U.S. Army Corps of Engineers watershed plans, which have been met with resistance from local stakeholders who felt left out of the planning process.



The Ala Wai watershed-Eric Tessmer/Flickr

Oceanit organized and hosted five community outreach meetings for stakeholders from all levels of the Ala Wai Watershed (Such as Makiki, Manoa and Palolo Valleys, and Waikiki). The result was great input and feedback from many stakeholders affected by the USACE plans. From private homeowners and businesses, to community associations and education groups, over 100 potentially impacted parties joined Oceanit to engage in discussions at community meetings that took place over a multi-week period in September.

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In October, Oceanit reported findings to the City Council. The public meeting was held at Ala Wai Elementary School on October 1st at 5:30pm and Oceanit delivered a summary of community inputs and alternatives, and the next steps of this project. These ideas included alternative infrastructures, moveable storm barriers, ecosystem restoration, flood gates and pumps, and retractable walls to control possible flooding. This meeting also allowed participants to provide additional comments and questions. The next phase of work will include a review of the original USACE plan, a review of the recent updates by the Corps, and a review and analysis of alternatives to reach a recommended approach. We are pleased to share the comments and questions provided by meeting participants [at the 10/1 Ala Wai Elementary School meeting in this PDF document](#), and below:

Safety

Sense of urgency? Where I live a water main broke and threatened to flood our elevator controls underneath the elevator and elevator bay. The elevator had to be shut down as well as our water. The impact of a 100-year event will shut down scores of Waikiki buildings. It would take weeks or months to restore elevators to these buildings. Imagine living on the 25th floor and having to use stairs to transfer food and maybe water.

What can we do as individuals, a community and a nation to reduce the risk of a one-hundred-year flood?

A flooding event will certainly be combined with a hurricane & storm surge. Is that in the model? And solved?

Why are the "rolled up burrito things" allowed to wash into streams and clogging/tangling up with the organic debris & together trash when they are intended for BMP's? Whoever is using those need to be responsible for their placement for their placement & removal. It seems like they are clogging up streams in lower Makiki

What doesn't any one clean the debris catchment behind Palolo Elementary in Waiomao Stream? Shouldn't there be regular visits by the Honolulu City & County rather than the community or myself having to remove debris, at risk to personal injury?

Given the intransient transient encampments at Diamond Head with their buckets of feces traveling down - current to the Ala Wai - have you considered the water quality data under these irrevocable circumstances?

This plan still flood all adjacent neighborhoods. Did your review or suggest solutions that comprehensive for the entire ahupuaa?

Planning

What is your current timeline for start and completion?

What happens to your plan when the PPA is signed probably end of Nov. Won't the project be "locked in place" at that time?

What is the timetable for arriving at consensus? What happens if mayor signs PPA in the meantime?

<https://www.oceanit.com/news/ala-wai-flood-control-plan-community-comments>

10/18/2019

My time is valuable. I expected **SPECIFIC PLANS** like USACE released this week. Very disappointed this moment.

Didn't the Corp already rule out gates and pumps? Train left the station? Design plan already complete?

Can the scope be adjusted to include water/flood management beyond the stream area? ie. possibility of including flood management strategies in surrounding neighborhoods before rain is in the stream/current scope area?

What is your assurance Army Corps will change the plan given they have said the funding is for the project "as is" and any changes may void the funding?

What is the plan for the Hausten Ditch?

Community Alternatives

Which one of the community suggestions is the most practical?

SERIOUS POLLUTION REDUCTION AND FLOOD MITIGATION when done together lead to different design solutions including constructed wetlands in Ala Wai Golf Course & Kapiolani Park

Which are the viable alternatives?

Why don't we study the way Netherlands/Holland is doing? The top world country underwater (regarding gov technology)
- (1) internet research (2) meeting with Dutch engineers (3) twin Dutch city with Honolulu???

What alternatives to detention basins in Manoa mauka would Oceanit recommend?

Will the revised plan with the change in detention basins be approved by HQ? At what time?

To preserve the fragile beauty of our island that is being ruined by taller and danger buildings plus too much concrete, I ask that 4' high concrete walls on Ala Wai are not a part of the solution

Why not add a flood gate with pumps at Ala Moana Blvd & dredge the Ala Wai canal deeper?

Recommend 5 Step Solution:

- (1) Focus retention basin at Ala Wai golf course
- (2) Dredge Ala Wai to its original 25ft depth
- (3) Create feral pig exclusion zone within watershed
- (4) Continuous fresh seawater pumping from Kapahulu grain
- (5) Instantaneous floodwater pumping and flood gates at Ala Wai bridge

Oceanit Engagement & Communication

What (specific) alternatives to the current Corp. plan is Oceanit researching?

Will Oceanit evaluate or give an opinion on whether the community & affected stakeholders are adequately engaged during the Draft EIS process on the rescope Ala Wai Project in October 2012?

I understand that Oceanit is helping to facilitate dialog and find the sweet-spot compromise. But, mayor and governor & City Council are rushing toward debt financing & a signed PPA, without consideration of a dialog or suggestion process

I'm not a computer person, how do I get in touch with anyone?

Though its the first meeting, not much information given. Alternatives!!

Engineering is the first step to a solution. Community ownership & respect for the watershed Mauka & Makai. How can we get government and the community pieces be integral to the puzzle?

Will this Oceanit process prevent the PPA from being signed?

Does Oceanit have any specific USACE plan changes to recommend?

Why didn't the Corp investigate more fully the user groups? I paddle canoes @McCully and they didn't

I am a neighborhood board member and it has been very unclear as to how to engage with Oceanit. I would like to be added to the distribution list and invited to future community engagement meetings. Mahalo!

When will the next meeting be? Where, when, time?

<p>When was community input first solicited for this project? (Patrick at Oceanit said the project was engineered/designed several years ago)</p> <p>Do you have a way to keep community group leaders involved in your meetings until your suitable resolution is reached?</p>	<p>solicit any inputs from the start</p> <p>Are you part of or talking with USACE? Are they committed to working with you and within their monetary allowances? How do you hope to yield the Army Corps decisions, the community desires, and the state, city and federal deadlines or time restraints?</p> <p>You have identified & compiled information. What is the next step?</p>	<p>Public notice in multiple medias please!</p> <p>Will Oceanit validate or invalidate the USACE</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) alternative 3a (2) data collection and usage (3) methodology (4) flood modeling (5) property damage claims (6) community-generated alternatives
<p>Ala Wai Canal</p> <p>Suggestion: Ala Wai golf course detention basin should be greatly expanded to accommodate flood and its intake inflows should be greatly enlarged to ensure that flood water really enter into the Ala Wai Golf Course detention basin</p> <p>A Moiliili wall on the Ala Wai canal without a wall (or berm) on the Manoa palolo canal will let ala wai school flood because it is 2 feet lower than the Waikiki side</p>	<p>As a resident of the impacted community for 50 years, I haven't seen the need to wall the Ala Wai Canal to prevent flooding of Waikiki. How sure are you that flooding will affect Waikiki and surrounding areas?</p> <p>The Ala Wai canal was designed in 1920 but built with two outlets to the ocean. Where is the feasibility analysis of this permanent solution?</p> <p>If you proceed with this project, how will the approx 11 canoe clubs have access to the canal, where will we relocate? There are more than 11 canoe clubs during high school season</p> <p>(1) Do the engineers use the Ala Wai Park (2) Do they paddle? (3) Do they help with stream canal cleanups? Please come paddle with us. Let us show you the problems & the trash. www.friendsofkc.org</p>	<p>If you are planning for the 100-year event, what is your plan to maintain your "drainage system" and who is responsible if/when its not maintained properly?</p> <p>How was the height of the 4' determined? Instead a 2' wall was erected along the Waikiki side of the Ala Wai it would not look or feel like a "wall" and at 2' would provide a nice seating area for Waikiki residents & tourists because it should be built with similar rock to make the wall look continuous. At 2' I find it hard to believe that the Waikiki wall would be breached before significant back flow would flood Iolani School, Ala Wai Park and the golf course first.</p> <p>(1) Seems there are three projects in pipeline related to Ala Wai (a) Pedestrian bridge (b) Ala Wai cleaning (Genki balls), and (c) this project. Is it coordinated at all? (2) View of Ala Wai is very important. Is it considered to build earthen levees instead of concrete wall?</p>
<p>Environment</p> <p>Something that Pat Sullivan said was doing a more comprehensive plan but done incrementally, perhaps focusing first on flood mitigation, followed by habitat restoration. This is backwards since habitat restoration could in fact, mitigate much of the community's concerns.</p> <p>Why hasn't sea level rise been taken into consideration? Would sea level rise be counterproductive to flood pumps in the Ala Wai?</p>	<p>What is the carbon footprint of the Waikiki tourist industry including airline fuel & how does this relate to global warming & risk of 100-year flood?</p> <p>How is ecosystem/habitat restoration going to be incorporated? How will there be transparency in the suitable resolutions so that the community is aware of proposed designs as they are being developed? And can we have a say?</p> <p>Has there been any plans to implement indigenous knowledge - specifically the Ahupuaa system of stream management in which the community helps in maintaining the streams and channels?</p> <p>With pollution of near-shore marine ecosystem - with the current USACE design - which does not address clean water/water quality - contamination of coral reef ecosystem will be more frequent, not even a 100-year event at even a "rain bomb" event year mauka will result in siltation & organic pollutants in the coral reef ecosystem</p>	<p>Can the City's Department of Planning & Permitting develop new laws & restrictions for more green space & less concrete to absorb rainwater & have less drainage into our streams & streets?</p>

pumps in the Ala Wai:

While the focus is on flood mitigation, without a more holistic/systems-thinking approach the intent of what the USACE current project design will not be sustainable in the long term - will a more comprehensive approach be considered in order to implement a much more effective solution to the flood issue?

As part of the project, shouldn't the Corps establish a sensor technology throughout the watershed from the top of the mountain into the coral reef ecosystem to monitor any changes in the watershed. This will serve as an indicator of what is working & what is not, when contaminants are entering the stream systems!

Miscellaneous

There is a new Colonel in charge or a new person in charge of USACE. Have you been involved in conversation regarding modification? What might these modifications be?

In the chief's report, sea level rise is considered in this Ala Wai USACE project. Also, chief report says state through DLNR is to operate & maintain the USACE project. How did state responsibility get transferred to the city?

What are the disposition items compartmentalized? It is a process from a beginning to perpetual ongoing maintenance and utilization. Why not use the Ahupuaa model because it works?

You mention experts from UH, and other groups are a part of data sharing for this project. What data specifically (water quality, hydrology, rainfall) is being shared and by whom? and how does this contribute to the project?

Is the Army Corps or anyone else require to do any mitigation projects in the project areas or off-site related to this project?

- 300 ft tall earthen detention basin failure because of lack of maintenance.
- Most earthen dams are flatter lands & not in a stream that has steep side
- Sea level rise will affect the Ala Wai Canal & Waikiki if any flood water reached the canal
- Hoomaluhia's basin isn't like Palolo, Waikiki, Manoa

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